

History of Libraries in Clarendon

Clarendon Social Library 1829

The first mention found of a library in Clarendon was the March 24, 1829 Rutland Weekly Herald in which it was announced:

We are requested to give notice that a meeting of the young men of Clarendon will be holden at Benj. Whitney's, on the 4th April proximo, at 1 o'clock P.M., for the purpose of taking measures to establish a new Social Library. General attendance is requested.

Benjamin Whitney (1777 – 1843) had an inn in North Clarendon Village. While we don't know the details of how this Social Library was organized, social libraries typically had annual dues used to buy books which members could borrow. Sometimes students might be allowed to borrow books for free and other non-members borrow for a fee. Some social libraries included discussion or debate sessions.

The Nov. 15, 1831 Rutland Weekly Herald had a notice which implies a periodic renewal of the library holdings rather than an ongoing process of simply adding new volumes:

The members of the Clarendon Social Library, are informed that there will be a meeting of the said society, at the Hall of B. Whitney in Clarendon on the last Saturday of November inst. A general attendance of the members is requested, and also that the books would be returned; as measures will be taken to dispose of them, and arrangements made to procure a new Library. J.T. Parker

J.T. Parker was Jonathan T. Parker (ca. 1808 – 1832). The Parker family were major landholders and an important family in Clarendon. A question that arises is to what extent was young Jonathan central to the continuance of the library. He passed away Feb. 2, 1832 at age 24 just 2.5 months after this notice was posted and no further documentation of the Clarendon Social Library has been found.

Clarendon Library Association 1886

The next known attempt at a community library appears to have gotten its start in Feb. 1886 as evidenced by this account from the Feb. 23, 1886 Rutland Daily Herald:

About 50 young men and women convened at Albert H. Spencer's in East Clarendon last week and formed themselves into the Clarendon Library association. Dr. E.H. Chamberlain, F.B. Kingsley, and A.H. Steward were appointed a committee to draft a constitution and by-laws to present at a future meeting.

The day following the initial organizing meeting, Feb. 24, 1886, there was another article in the Rutland Daily Herald adding another layer of detail to this organizing effort:

The plan for the Clarendon Library association originated with two of the young men of the east part of the town, one of whom is the enterprising young physician who recently came to town. The movement is helped forward by the enthusiasm manifested in connection with the Rutland Free Library association.

At the meeting for preliminary organization, Rev. G.H. Morss was chosen chairman and D.C. Hicks secretary. There are no funds as yet in the hands of the association, and no mature plans for raising any, this being left to the committee on permanent organization, consisting of Dr. Chamberlain, F.B. Kingsley and Harvey Steward, to report at a future meeting of the association. It has been suggested as a nucleus that each member make a gift of one or more good books to the association. The need of such a library is apparent, as there are few large private libraries in town, and no town library beyond the few state, educational and law reports usually found connected with the town clerk's office. The movement is enthusiastically welcomed by the young people, and is a great step forward in the line of mutual improvement which is to tell favorably on the present and future generations. The association will be officered and managed by both young men and young women.

The host for this initial gathering, Albert H. Spencer (1853 – 1933), had varied interests throughout his life. He was a railroad agent at the time of the 1880 census, a painter & paper hangar in 1900, and a farmer in 1910. By 1920 he was a bookkeeper in Miami, FL. and a real estate broker there in 1930. Frank Bliss Kingsley (1850 – 1897) was a farmer. Albert Harvey Stewart (1856 – 1920) was a farmer at the time of the 1880 and 1900 censuses and then a mail carrier in 1910 and 1920.

Dr. Edward H. Chamberlain was part of the Clarendon community for only a brief period but apparently with great impact. Born 1858 in Westford, MA he was a student at Bowdoin College at the time of the 1880 census. In 1884 he was in Ohio where he married Jessie Rose (1861 – 1885). Widowed in 1885 he came to Clarendon. In 1886 he married again in Chelmsford, MA (Flora Adams 1865 - 1944). He was still in Clarendon in early 1887 when a Jan. 6 Rutland Daily Herald article noted his mother was visiting from Massachusetts. It is not known when he left Clarendon but he was living in Chelmsford, MA by 1889. In 1899 he became a Mason and in 1900 he was still in Chelmsford. In 1901 he was quoted in the Boston Globe on a ptomaine poisoning outbreak and in 1902 he was recorded as speaking at the Massachusetts Eclectic Medical Society on "*The Bacteriological Diagnosis of Diphtheria*". The next year he appears in the Boston Globe as living in North Carolina and staying in Billerica, MA for a visit. At some point after that he moved again to Cheraw, SC. His journey ended in 1907 when according to the Nov. 21, 1907 Bamberg Herald:

Dr. Chamberlain, a young physician, according to the Bennettsville Advocate, was fatally injured a few nights ago in Cheraw by a "prominent citizen," a Mr. Sellers, whom the doctor was treating for delirium tremens. The doctor died the next day, and the newspapers simply announce it as a sudden death.

Two additional names are noted in this second article. Rev. George Henry Morss (ca. 1833 – 1912) was a clergyman with the Brick Church 1876 - 1886. David Champney Hicks (1846 – 1919) was a farmer.

The group progressed quickly and at their March 9th meeting Dr. Chamberlain was named President, Albert Stewart Vice President, David Hicks Secretary, and Albert Spencer Treasurer. The Library Committee consisted of Rev. George Morss, Frank Kingsley, Edwin (1833 – 1919) and Emma H. (Smith) (1838 – 1888) Congdon, and Miss Addie Pierce. The Entertainment Committee consisted of Mrs. A.H. Spencer (Katherine Bishop 1858 - 1932), Susan (Horton) Smith (1850 – 1943), her son Walter (1872 – 1956) and her nephew Clinton Horton (1868 -). It is of note that Walter was only 13 years old at the

time. His father Horace Eaton Smith (1846 – 1880) had died when Walter was only 7. Susan was Cornelia Bailey's sister, Cornelia being the benefactress of the current Bailey Memorial Library. In 1890 Susan married Nelson Fisher making her the Susan Fisher noted in the entry about Cornelia Bailey in the People collection. This article on the March 9, 1886 meeting also noted a gift of 100 volumes had been received.

The Clarendon Library Association continued to make rapid progress. At their meeting of March 19, 1886 they had a fundraiser supper that generated \$30 and included entertainment in the form of:

The choice of neckties and the searching for mates afforded considerable amusement to old and young.

The May 30, 1888 Rutland Daily Herald noted their annual meeting having been held at the home of Albert Spencer. When the Clarendon Library Association ceased operations is not known but in the Feb. 26, 1895 Rutland Daily Herald a report by the State Library Commission listed it as "*books scattered; defunct*".

Clarendon Library Association 1903

The 1886 iteration of a library was centered in East Clarendon. At some point after the ending of that effort a new Clarendon Library Association began in North Clarendon as evidenced by an article in the Oct. 28, 1903 Rutland Daily Herald noting an upcoming Halloween social at the home of the Secretary Mrs. Henry Winslow. This was Agnes (Holden) Winslow (1869 – 1923). Members were requested to bring cake.

The Nov. 13, 1903 Rutland Daily Herald noted that the library would be open every Saturday 2PM – 5PM. On May 13, 1904 there was an announcement that:

The Clarendon Library Association will hold a "conundrum social" at the home of Mrs. J.H. Davis this afternoon. Each person is requested to bring a conundrum written on a slip of paper. Prizes will be awarded. The public is invited.

Mrs. Davis was Mary Alice (Arnold) Davis (1858 – 1945). The following month in the June 10, 1904 edition it was announced that the association would be meeting with Mrs. J.W. Plumley. This was Julia (Arnold) Plumley (1852 – 1914). The article also noted 40 volumes had recently been ordered for the library and that a case containing 40 volumes had been loaned to the people of East Clarendon.

Note: See the *Mary Alice Davis, Town Clerk* entry in the people collection for more information on her.

At the 1905 annual meeting reported in the April 11, 1905 Rutland Daily Herald Mary Davis was elected President, Julia Plumley Vice President, and Agnes Winslow Treasurer. The Aug. 25, 1905 edition reported a social at the home of Mary Davis. Members were to bring a cake and a drawing for a bed quilt was to occur. Mary Davis again hosted the annual meeting as reported March 31, 1906.

The March 9, 1907 edition reported Mrs. Prentice Perry was the host for 1907's annual meeting. This was Agnes (Dodge) Perry (1850 – 1915). It was perhaps creative license on the part of the reporter but this article referenced "*the literary association*", a phrase not used in prior articles.

North Clarendon Library Association 1907

It was the same people as were part of the Clarendon Library Association but beginning with the March 19, 1907 article in the Rutland Daily Herald the organization was known as the North Clarendon Library Association. Whether it was a purposeful name change or simply how the organization came to refer to itself we don't know. That March 19th article announced a "*poverty social*" to be held at the home of Agnes Winslow. This event was described as:

The attendance was large and the poverty costumes created considerable mirth. Mrs. William Fish won a prize for wearing the worst looking "rig". The costumes worn by Mrs. Jennie Marsh, Mrs. John Kingsley, Mrs. C.P. Smith and Mrs. L.C. Squiers were voted the most spectacular ones. Heavy fines were imposed for wearing jewelry or finery. A poverty lunch was served consisting of baked beans, brown bread, ginger bread and cambric tea. The affair was the success of the season and financially.

The women mentioned in the article were Abbie (Pratt) Fish (1863 – 1925), Jennie (Croft) Marsh (1854 – 1941), Lizzie (Wyman) Kingsley (1856 – 1940), Emma (Flanders) Smith (1867 – 1942), and Harriet (Platt) Squier (1845 – 1933).

Meeting and/or socials announcements for the North Clarendon Library Association were found in the May 14, 1907, June 30, 1908, July 22, 1908, Nov. 10, 1908, Dec. 14, 1908 and Dec. 17, 1908 Rutland Daily Heralds. The June 30th event was a "*sociable*" at the home of Mrs. L.R. Burr. This was Gertrude (Johnson) Burr (1865 – 1942). The article from Dec. 14th noted a sale of "*useful and fancy articles*" at the home of Gertrude Burr.

The Oct. 30th 1914 Rutland Daily Herald noted the donation of 500 volumes presented to the North Clarendon Library by Mrs. Annie (Smith) Haynes (1867 -1936) in memory of her late father Arima B. Smith (1830 – 1908). These books were his personal library. This donation came at a time of significant change in Annie's life. She had divorced David Haynes (1842 – 1892) just two weeks prior in Concord, NH for "*treatment seriously injuring health and endangering reason*" and married Edward Carey (1871 – 1948) in Lowell, MA two weeks after the donation.

Flowers from the North Clarendon Library Association were sent to the funeral of Julia Plumley per the Dec. 28, 1914 Rutland Daily Herald. The June 15' 1915 edition noted a meeting was held to elect officers.

What it was about was not stated but the Jan. 2, 1918 Rutland Daily Herald announced an upcoming joint meeting of the Red Cross Society and the North Clarendon Library Association at the Mason home in North Clarendon. This was the home of Perley Scott Mason (1864 – 1943). The announcement indicated "*business of importance will be transacted*". Again in the July 1, 1918 edition there was a joint

meeting deemed important at the Red Cross rooms. Most likely this business of importance was in support of the Red Cross Society's World War 1 efforts.

It could simply be lack of reporting or it could be the North Clarendon Library Association faded away but it all but disappears from any kind of reporting in the newspaper. The July 16, 1923 Rutland Daily Herald makes notes of flowers from the Clarendon Library Association having gone to Agnes Winslow's funeral. This was the first article found since 1918, and then nothing further after this sending of flowers until 1933 when the North Clarendon Library Association turned everything they had over to the new town library. To what extent it was in operation during those years is not known.

Clarendon Town Library 1933

The Will of Cornelia W. (Horton) Bailey (1837 – 1919) left \$1,000, 400 books from her personal collection, and two bookcases for a library in the Clarendon Flats School and Town Hall; the income from which was to be used for the purchase of new library books. Under the terms of the Will the books themselves were not to be removed from the library. How to interpret the "removal of books" aspect of Cornelia's Will took until Feb. 1933 to resolve. At issue was whether the wording of the Will meant the books were to be permanently housed in the library at the Clarendon Flats School but otherwise available for borrowing in the normal manner libraries do or whether the books couldn't leave the building at all. During this 14 year void (1919 – 1933) interest on the initial \$1,000 bequest added about \$800 to the account.

A series of Rutland Daily Herald articles on Feb. 15, Feb. 20, and March 6, 1933 recounted the history of the Bailey bequest, the ensuing controversy, and its resolution as to whether the books could be borrowed in normal library fashion. The resolution came in 1933 when according to the Feb. 20, 1933 Rutland Daily Herald the State's Attorney Jack A. Crowley (1891 – 1969) made a ruling on the controversy. He determined that the original 400 books were to in fact stay in the library as reference materials but that new books purchased off of the interest on the \$1,000 bequest could be circulated in typical library fashion. In addition to Cornelia's personal collection of 400 books, about 800 books from the North Clarendon Library Association were donated to this new Clarendon Public Library. Those 800 books could also be circulated in the community. Whether the North Clarendon Library Association had been dormant or active up until this time is not known.

To get things going an initial meeting between the Library Trustees (who were appointed in 1920), the School Board, and the Selectmen was scheduled for Feb. 18, 1933. The article indicated it was expected that many parents would also attend the meeting. The Library Trustees were Aldace W. Newton (1878 – 1972), Thomas C. Pierce (1873 – 1963), and Mary (Arnold) Davis (1858 – 1945). School Board members were Curtis Page (1877 – 1937), Laura (Greene) Johnson (1881 – 1964), and George McMahon (1878 – 1950). Selectman were William C. Marsh (1889 – 1943), George Leonard (1897 – 1984), and Harrison Savery (1883 – 1966)

The March 6, 1933 Rutland Daily Herald indicated that the Bailey books had been unpacked, catalogued, and placed on bookshelves. The article is as follows:

The books bequeathed to Clarendon by the late Mrs. Cornelia Horton Bailey have been catalogued and arranged in their two book cases in the dining room of the town hall, where they can be inspected by the voters at town meeting. There are 188 bound volumes besides a number of booklets and magazines.

Conspicuous among them are a 15 volume encyclopedia, "Library of Universal Knowledge", a 14 volume set of Dickens, a 12 volume set of the Waverly novels by Sir Walter Scott, a 10 volume set of J. Fenimore Cooper and a number of translations including a five volume edition of Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables", a three volume edition of LeSages's "Gil Blas" and a four volume set of Eugene Sne that includes "The Wandering Jew" and "The Mysteries of Paris".

Many of the histories and biographies deal with the leaders and events of the Civil war and the war with Spain. There is a five volume set of Macauley's "History of England", Creasy's "Fifteen Decisive Battles". Headley's "Napoleon and His Marshalls", Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico". Parkman's "Oregon Trail", and Ridpath's "United States".

A number of books tell of Africa. There are 12 bound volumes of "The Century" magazine embracing the numbers from November, 1888 to October, 1894, several art books, including "The Works of Hogarth", and an excellent copy of "The Will of Samuel Appleton".

Currently in the attic of the Town Hall there are 677 books catalogued and boxed. Almost none of the books noted in the above article are amongst them. That article does not list all of the books in the Bailey collection but presumably most of the books currently stored at the Town Hall come from the 800 volume donation from the former North Clarendon Library Association in 1933 and subsequent additions to the library during its years of operation.

In anticipation of the opening of the new Clarendon Public Library, supportive efforts began in the community. The May 5, 1933 Rutland Daily Herald noted a fundraiser social at the Grange Hall led by Cecelia McMahon (1907 – 1998), daughter of School Board member George McMahon, and Ruth Hatch (1909 – 2003). The follow-up article on May 9th indicated whist was played at seven tables and sandwiches, cake, and coffee were served. Favors were awarded to Mrs. Lenzy Baker, Mrs. Theodore Hubbard, Elizabeth Hatch, Willard Squier, Gordon White, and Richard McMahon.

The May 14, 1933 Rutland Daily Herald reported that Articles of Association were filed with the Secretary of State's office for the purpose of accepting bequests under the Will of Cornelia W. Bailey and establishing a public library in Clarendon. In addition to the original Trustees Aldace W. Newton, Mary A. Davis, and Thomas C. Pierce, Amherst B. Weeks (1886 – 1980) and Ellen (Leonard) Potter (1901 - 1995) also signed the document, presumably as additional Trustees.

The May 17, 1933 Rutland Daily Herald spoke to a very large fundraiser event for the new library, presumably at the former Meeting House in Chippenhook which was referred to as the school hall:

A capacity crowd attended a party given by the school children and 20 young men and women at the school hall for the benefit of the Clarendon library fund. Mrs. Ellen Leonard Potter directed the program.

The one act plays and monologues proved to be big hits. Joseph Raiche, local singer, pleased with a solo. Another favorite was Theodosia Ann Mullin of West Rutland, who sang and gave a tap dance. Her mother, Mrs. Edward Mullin, acted as accompanist.

Following the program refreshments were served and a four piece orchestra furnished music for dancing. The program will be repeated at the Clarendon town hall Friday night at 8 o'clock. The proceeds will be used toward purchasing a new victrola for the school.

Following are those who took part in the entertainment and will appear in Friday night's program: Sarah Parker, Olive and Caroline Sheldon, John DeGraff, Joseph Raiche, Ellen Dollerd, John Colvin, Anna Parker, Olive and Merritt Sheldon, Marion Ballard, Rachel Wescott, Tina Lanfear and Lorenzo Atwood, Junior Sheldon, Wilmer Lanfear, Francis McLellan, Dorothy Randall, Clarence Ballard, Janet and Francis McLellan, Lucille James, Lawrence Doty, Theodosia Mullin, Charles Hier, Harold Lanfear, Richard Everest, Sarah George, Carl Parker, Frederick and Roger Hier, Winifred Raiche, Miss Brown, Myrtle and Rita Lanfear, William Colville, Mrs. Joseph Raiche, Theodore Raiche.

The May 2, 1933 Rutland Daily Herald gave an update on the town's effort readying for the opening of the library. It noted approval of the Articles of Association having been received, plans to build bookshelves, additional books having been donated, and branches of the library being established at the schools so as to make books more readily available in all parts of town. Another update on progress made was in the June 2, 1933 edition. Both of those articles and another on June 7, 1933 note book donations by Rose (Gould) Holden (1871 – 1935) of Ludlow. Several of those books are still amongst the books in the Town Hall attic.

Preparations for the opening proceeded more slowly than anticipated. It was an article in the Oct. 26, 1933 Rutland Daily Herald that spoke to the library finally being ready to open. That announcement was also a bit premature still given the actual opening date did not occur until Feb. 10, 1934. It appears that expectation of an imminent opening triggered the North Clarendon Library Association to bring their organization to a close. On Nov. 22nd there was an article announcing a meeting of the North Clarendon Library Association to talk about turning over the library to the town. The Nov. 29th article indicates:

It was voted to present to the Clarendon Town library the club's four book cases and about 400 books, consisting of poems, fiction and biography. Also \$100 in cash was turned over to the treasurer of the town library to be used for the purchase of new books or other purposes.

Opening day finally arrived Feb. 10, 1934 with an announcement in the prior day's Rutland Daily Herald. It would be open Saturdays from 1PM – 5PM and 7PM – 9PM with Marjorie Kilborn (1916 – 1993) as librarian. The article noted that a book shelf had been installed at each of the schools in Clarendon and that assistance with cataloguing had been provided by Elizabeth Williams from the state library at Montpelier. The Feb. 12, 1934 Rutland Daily Herald noted an afternoon tea was served by Annette (Aldrich) Pierce (1878 – 1957), Laura (Greene) Johnson (1881 – 1964), and the Clarendon Flats School teacher Mary (O'Brien) Roberts (1879 – 1936).

Articles about the new library continued to be published.:

- Feb. 14, 1934 notes school children enjoying the use of the library books.
- April 13, 1934 advertises the library's hours.
- June 5, 1934 announces the completion of the cataloguing project and that 50 volumes have been borrowed from the State library for a few months.
- Aug. 4, 1934 reports a gift of 30 books from Belmont that were duplicates in their collection.
- Oct. 19, 1934 notes 19 books from the library being at the Chippenhook School.
- March 14, 1935 has an article about a large donation of books from Col. H. Edward Dyer (1870 – 1948) in honor of his parents Horace Hoxie Dyer (1820 – 1905) and Abigail Jane (Hitchcock) Dyer (1843 – 1913). Amongst the books donated was a set of Encyclopedia Britannica, 11 of the 16 volumes which were found in the 2019 cataloguing process, albeit they are in poor condition. Otis Barrett (1872 – 1950) was also noted in this article as donating a number of books, and again more books from Rose Holden, now of Chester, VT.
- Nov. 8, 1935 announces a library fundraiser program organized by the seven Clarendon teachers and put on by some of their students, and then followed by a social hour.
- Nov. 18, 1935 again notes books from the state library and the Clarendon Public library for both children and adults being available at the Chippenhook School.
- Nov. 19, 1935 reports that a consignment of books from the Clarendon library for the people of the community are with Edward Briggs (1908 - 1990) in Clarendon Springs.
- Dec. 4, 1935 notes proceeds of \$32.50 of an East Clarendon fundraiser for the library.
- Jan. 10, 1936 reminds people books are available at the Chippenhook School and that Ethel Mary (Eddy) Briggs (1909 – 2001) of Clarendon Springs has a consignment of books for borrowing.
- May 27, 1936 has an article about a large regional librarians meeting in Wallingford at which Alice Johnson from the Clarendon School Board read a paper on "The use of Library Books in Rural Schools" and telling of her experiences with the Clarendon library. She concluded her talk with a reading of poems by two Clarendon students, Helen Lafrancis (1925 – 2002) and David Minard (1924 – 1995).
- June 2, 1936 announces the purchase of 35 new state-approved children's books and also "North to the Orient" by Ann Morrow Lindbergh. That book is still amongst the books stored in the Town Hall attic. Also noted were book donations by Mattie (Fox) Dyer (1870 – 1956).
- Nov. 20, 1936 has an article about a variety show put on at Town Hall by each of the schools: N. Clarendon; minstrel show, Clarendon Springs; play, Chippenhook; story of Thanksgiving, Clarendon Flats; operetta, Hill School; playlet, E. Clarendon; songs and recitations.
- Nov. 24, 1936 reports the variety show netted \$23.40 for the Clarendon library. The money was to be used towards an encyclopedia bought by the library.

- April 2, 1937 announces a play to be given by the Ira Players at the Clarendon town hall for the benefit of the Clarendon library.
- Aug. 23, 1937 announces that Dorothy Annable will be at the library with the book wagon from Rutland at 3PM the next day.
- Nov. 16, 1937 announces a fundraiser program for the library to be put on by the Clarendon schools. The program was to include plays, recitations, music, old fashioned clog dancing, tap and folk dances.
- Nov. 18, 1938 announces another program of recitations, songs, plays, and dances put on by the schools for the benefit of the library.
- Nov. 21, 1939 announces \$26 was realized from a program given by the schools; this being the 4th year this program has been given. About 200 people were present. It notes the librarian is Vivian Dorothy (Woodruff) Boynton (1912 – 1985) and that it is open Saturdays 3PM – 5 PM.
- July 20, 1940 reports the purchase of 30 new juvenile and adult books.
- Nov. 11, 1942 again announces a benefit program for the library put on by the schools.
- Nov. 15, 1945 announces the annual benefit program for the library put on by the schools.
- Nov. 27, 1946 reports \$37.70 was raised at the annual benefit program for the library put on by the schools. About 275 people were in attendance at the town hall for a program put on by the 139 students enrolled in the schools. It notes the librarian was Guila Adella (St. John) Ackley (1904 – 2001).
- Jan. 12, 1948 notes the school pupils and teacher in Clarendon Springs donated \$5 to the Clarendon Library.

Anecdotal reports indicate that the library at the Town Hall was still there through the 1950's and into the 1960's but newspaper accounts or other documentation of the library have not been found. This is further supported by there being a handful of books published in the 50's and 60's amongst the books stored in the Town Hall attic. Presumably they were left over from the library. The best guess on the part of the author of this article is that the library at the Town Hall closed in 1970 in conjunction with the opening of the new Clarendon Elementary School. A presumption that the newest books went to the school library would account for the relative handful of books from the 1950's and 60's in the Town Hall attic.

There are as well anecdotal reports indicating that the library was at Mary Pratt's house in the mid-1950's. Perhaps it was a satellite operation not unlike books having been placed at the various schools. Mary (Sparks) Pratt (1895 – 1970) had been Town Clerk 1950 – 1970.

Bailey Memorial Library 1991

To what extent the interest on the 1919 \$1,000 Cornelia Bailey bequest was spent between 1933 when a town library was formed at the Town Hall and when the library closed down in the 1960's is not known

but the 1987 Town Report indicated a balance of \$8099 in the Library Fund. Prior Town Reports did not show a library fund. Two years later the 1989 Town Report had it at \$9,476. It apparently was two funds in that the 1990 Town Report showed the starting balance as \$2,407 in the Municipal Library Fund and \$7,069 in the Cornelia Bailey Library fund.

The 1990 Town Report indicated the Trustees had been working to open a library since March 1990 and that it opened Jan. 12, 1991. It noted that the Trustees intent was to serve the recreational and basic reference needs of the townspeople, but not to become a sophisticated reference library. It was open a total of 15 hours per week spread across Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. There was a Children's Story Hour on Saturdays. Carol Chatfield was the President of the Bailey Memorial Library Trustees at that time.

The new library was located in the former Kalow Controls building on Rt 7B North in North Clarendon village. The Jan. 9, 1991 Rutland Daily Herald announced the opening of the new library and in the Jan. 28, 1991 edition they specifically promoted the Children's Story Hour under the direction of Cindy Wade scheduled for 10AM on Saturdays. Jean Surrell was listed as the contact in both articles.

The 1991 Town Report noted that the library was staffed by Lois Kahlen and Dorothy Barnes. Lois left in April 1992 but Dorothy continued to work at the library until her retirement in 2018. It was also noted that volunteers donated more than 307 hours to the library during the year.

In 1991 and 1992 the library's funding from the Town came via specific Articles on the Town Meeting Warrant and then in 1993 it began being included in the omnibus Town operating budget. During those first couple years the library Trustees had to make special appeals for support of those Articles such as can be seen in a March 1, 1991 Rutland Daily Herald article. Deborah Cecot and Diane Chartrand were listed as Trustees in that article. The article also gave a special thanks to Marge Burton, Robert Chartrand and other area business for their contributions of goods and services.

That 1991 Town Meeting did show support for this new venture by approving a \$7,000 budget for the new Bailey Memorial Library 331 -312. Though that was a fairly narrow approval margin, it was an otherwise tough year for proposed budgets as can be seen by the defeat of the elementary school budget 397 – 236, of the Town's general fund budget 336 – 298 and for an article for \$8,302 to the Rutland Free Library 450 - 186.

The library tried engaging wider audiences as can be seen in a Rutland Daily Herald article from May 22, 1995 announcing a Mystery Social at the library with a lively discussion of books by Vermont author Archer Mayor. He is the author of the Joe Gunther detective series.

The Bailey Memorial Library entered a new phase in July 2000 when they opened in their current space occupying the 1st floor of the former Grange Hall. Bringing new life to this historic structure was a multi year effort to obtain the funding and subsequently renovate and restore the building. See the *Grange Hall Renovation* entry in the Events collection for more information on that project. The 1970's historic

survey indicates this building was erected ca. 1880. Research by area historian Dawn Hance indicates the cheese factory was built by 1874 by Nicholas Powers, a nationally known covered-bridge builder who lived in Clarendon Flats. The cheese factory was subsequently bought by the Otter Creek Grange in 1921 and renovated into the Grange Hall. It continued as the Grange until 1987 when that organization dissolved and the building was given to the Clarendon Volunteer Fire Dept.

The Bailey Memorial Library continues to the present as an important part of Clarendon's social and educational fabric. Younger residents and those new to town in the past couple decades likely take the library's presence for granted; perhaps thinking it has been there far longer than it really has and being unawares of how much effort it took to bring the library to life and to create its present home. Few know who Cornelia Bailey was but her bequest in 1919 was instrumental in creating the library we now enjoy. See an article in the People collection to learn more about her. The volunteers of 30 years ago who brought this library to life and those that followed are the real unsung heroes to which Clarendon owes a great debt of gratitude.

Robert Underhill

November 2019